

# American Profile

How the Paul  
Ecke family  
developed the  
Christmas flower

## Poinsettia Ranch

### INSIDE:

- Hal O'Leary enables disabled snow skiers
- Finding a good home contractor
- Our Picks
- Make-ahead snacks



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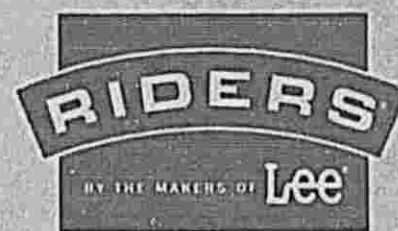
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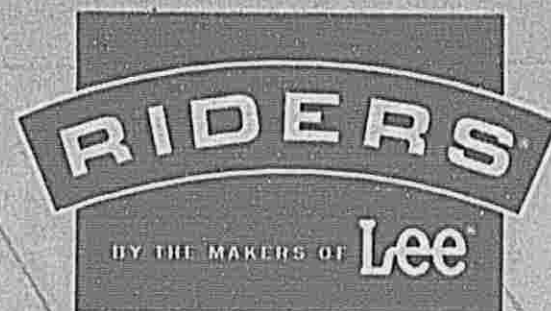




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## Ask American Profile

**Q** Who performs "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" at the end of the movie *50 First Dates*? I remember this particular version also was used on *ER* when Dr. Greene died.

—Mary Hall, Ore City, Texas

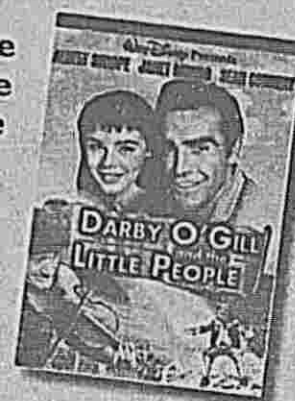
The lovely, ukulele-backed version was recorded in 1993 by Hawaiian singer Israel Kamakawiwo'ole, more widely known as "Iz" and also known for his physical stature, standing 6 feet, 6 inches tall and weighing some 700 pounds. After his death in 1997 of weight-related respiratory illness, his striking version of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" also was used in the movies *Finding Forester* and *The Big Bounce*, for TV episodes of *Providence*, *Charmed* and *Party of Five*, and in a 2006 commercial for Rice Krispies.

Hawaiian entertainer "Iz" took fans "Over the Rainbow" after his death.

**Q** Whatever happened to the young actress Janet Munro? She played in *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*.

—Susan S. Geneseo, New York

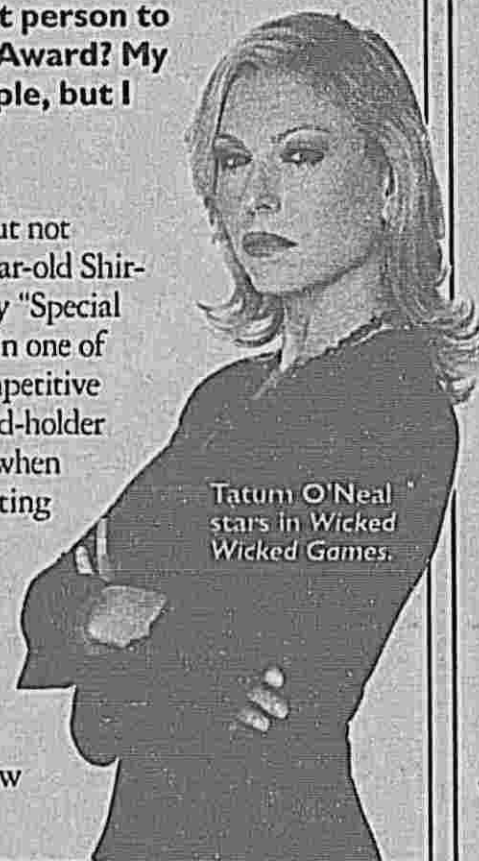
Munro died in 1972 at age 38 from an illness associated with heart disease. The spunky actress grew up on British TV and in 1959 caught the eye of Walt Disney, who gave her starring roles in several films, including *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* and *Swiss Family Robinson*. After winning a Golden Globe award for most promising newcomer, she began to outgrow youthful roles and lost momentum in her career. Two failed marriages and two miscarriages led to a bout with alcoholism before her untimely death.



**Q** Who is the youngest person to ever receive an Academy Award? My husband says Shirley Temple, but I think he's wrong.

—Abbie R., Boaz, Ala.

He's not completely wrong—but not completely right, either. Five-year-old Shirley Temple received an honorary "Special Oscar" in 1934, but it was not in one of the official Academy-voted competitive categories. Otherwise, the record-holder is Tatum O'Neal, who was 10 when she took home the Best Supporting Actress Award in 1973 for the movie *Paper Moon*. Thirty-three years later, O'Neal's still in the game. Her latest project: playing a devious spurned lover on the series *Wicked Wicked Games* on the new MyNetworkTV network. ★



Tatum O'Neal stars in *Wicked Wicked Games*.

Actor Sean Penn's most recent movie was *All the King's Men*.

**Q** Please give me some information on my favorite actor, Sean Penn. Where is he from, is he married and—most of all—is that beautiful head of hair all his own?

—Peggy G., Philadelphia

Penn, 46, was born in Santa Monica, Calif., and now lives in San Francisco with his wife, actress Robin Wright-Penn, and their two children. He made a rare TV appearance on *Larry King Live* last September to promote his latest film, *All the King's Men*, and chuckled after watching a segment on the different hairstyles he's sported over the years. "I'm a hair actor!" he said, laughing. And yes, those locks are really his.

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## JUST RELEASED...

### Paisley blends holiday heart with humor

Brad Paisley's first holiday album, *Brad Paisley Christmas*, delivers what he does best, blending heart and humor. George Jones, Little Jimmy Dickens and Bill Anderson make guest appearances on "Kung Pao Buckaroo Holiday," and Paisley's guitar work decorates the classics "Winter Wonderland" and "I'll Be Home For Christmas."

\* Cover photo: Robert Benson

■ Would you like to know more about your favorite celebrity or public figure?

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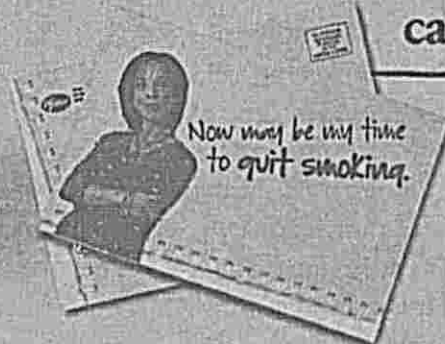
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## Cover Story

by MARTA W. ALDRICH  
Contributing Editor

How the Paul  
Ecke family  
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Christmas flower

# Poinsettia Ranch

**Paul Ecke III drives his pickup truck north on Interstate 5 in southern California, recalling the sea of poinsettias that once covered thousands of sun-splashed acres farmed by his family when he was growing up in San Diego County in the 1960s.**

"It was glorious when the red came in," says Ecke, 51, the third-generation owner of the Paul Ecke Ranch in Encinitas, Calif. (pop. 58,014).

Nowadays, as Christmas draws near each year, hundreds of thousands of poinsettia plants bloom in greenhouses on the ranch and millions of Ecke-bred poinsettias are sold to decorate homes, businesses and churches around the world. Ecke Ranch is the world's largest producer of poinsettias, providing 50 percent of the world's—and 75 percent of the nation's—supply.

"We like to think that poinsettias are nature's way of dressing up the holidays," says Andy Higgins, a horticulturalist and president of the Paul Ecke Ranch. "They're like the bow on the package."

## A holiday flower

Poinsettias have not always been synonymous with Christmas. Once considered a flowering roadside weed in Mexico, the gangly plant was brought to the United States in 1828 by Joel Poinsett, U.S. ambassador to Mexico and an amateur horticulturalist. In June of the following year, poinsettias were introduced to the public at an exhibition that was the precursor of today's Philadelphia Flower Show.

A century later, Ecke's grandfather began cultivating poinsettias in California and selling the



Paul Ecke III maintains the family's floral tradition.

ornamental plant as a Christmas flower. "It was brilliant marketing," says William LeFevre, executive director of Bartram's Garden in Philadelphia, America's oldest botanical garden. "Here you have this wonderful showy red plant you can provide people at the holidays. It was a winner."

The first Paul Ecke arrived in Los Angeles at age 5 with his parents who, like many other German immigrants at the time, worked the land for a living. "His parents never learned to speak English, so he had to take my great-grandfather to the

flower and produce market in L.A. and translate for him," Paul III says. "So he learned business at a very young age."

Launching his own business, Ecke focused on cultivating the red poinsettias that had migrated West over the decades and were growing wild in California. "My grandfather sort of stumbled upon it," says Paul III, who estimates the family business began between 1915 and 1920. "Poinsettias bloom naturally at Christmastime when the daylight hours get shorter. There was no official Christmas flower in those days, and he decided to fill the gap" by selling the cut flowers at a roadside stand on Sunset Boulevard.

As Los Angeles developed into an entertainment industry hub, Ecke moved his farming operation south in 1923 to the beach towns of Encinitas and Carlsbad, eventually growing poinsettias on 4,000 acres. "One year in the 1930s, my grandfather woke up to a hard freeze and every plant was dead," Paul III recounts. "They went out and dug beneath the soil line and the roots were alive. They reproduced from the roots and saved the business."

In 1955, Paul Ecke Jr. returned from Ohio State University with a degree in floraculture and new ideas about running his father's business. Instead of shipping poinsettia rootstock by rail to growers around the country, Paul Jr. advocated shipping less-expensive plant cuttings by airplane and moving the poinsettias from farm fields into climate-controlled greenhouses.

"I can remember some very heated arguments between my dad and my grandfather during this





Three generations of Eckes — Paul III, Paul and Paul Jr. — have produced poinsettias on the Paul Ecke Ranch in Encinitas, Calif. time," Paul III says. "My father would say, 'This is the future. Why can't you see?' And my grandfather would dig in his heels. Finally, my dad prevailed, thank goodness. If he hadn't, we wouldn't be here today."

### A budding business

As the family began replacing open fields with greenhouses in the 1960s, Paul Jr. took marketing to the next level. "He wanted to have a poinsettia in every house at Christmas," Paul III says. "So he gave poinsettias to the sets of *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson, the *Dinah Shore Show* and Christmas specials by Bob Hope and Ronald Reagan. He got them into the women's magazines like *Ladies Home Journal* and *Better Homes & Gardens*. It was subliminal advertising at its earliest. The women would open their magazines and see these nicely decorated homes with a Christmas tree and poinsettias everywhere, and then they would head to the florist and ask for poinsettias."

During the same time, Paul Jr. launched a breeding program to improve and expand the ranch's product line. Previously, Mother Nature provided occasional new varieties through mutation. But Paul Jr. saw no reason to wait on nature to develop stronger, more beautiful poinsettias in various shades of red, white and pink. "Even though he didn't have any competition, my dad was very forward-thinking," Paul III says.

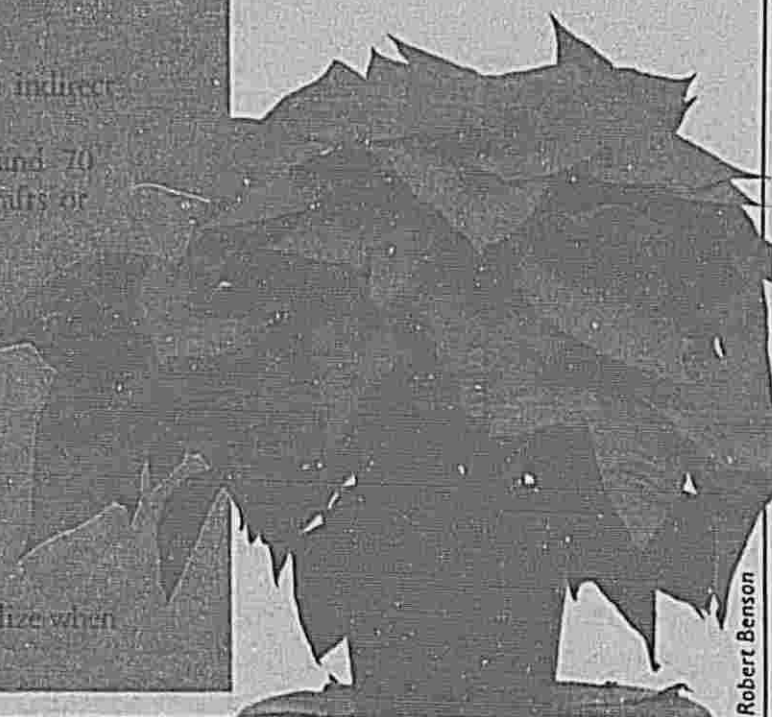
When Paul III bought the company in 1992 at age 37 after earning a master's of business administration degree from Duke University and working a stint at Hewlett-Packard, the Ecke Ranch faced competition from foreign growers for the first time. "Even though we had almost 100 years of loyalty from our customers, they were getting squeezed by the big-box stores and our new competitors were growing offshore and selling cuttings at half our price," he says.

In response, the ranch moved much of its growing operations to Guatemala beginning in 1997, invested in technology to improve the ranch's efficiency and diversified its product line to include other floral plants, including geraniums, impatiens and chrysanthemums.

(Continued on page 14)

### Caring for Poinsettias

- Poinsettias need light, so place them in indirect sunlight for at least six hours a day.
- Keep room temperature between 68 and 70 degrees. Do not place plants near cold drafts or excessive heat.
- Water thoroughly when the soil feels dry to the touch, but do not let plants sit in standing water. Overwatering causes plants to droop.
- To protect from chilling winds when transporting plants, carry them in a large shipping bag.
- To keep your plant after the holidays, fertilize after the blooming season with a balanced, all-purpose fertilizer. Do not fertilize when plants are in bloom.



Robert Benson

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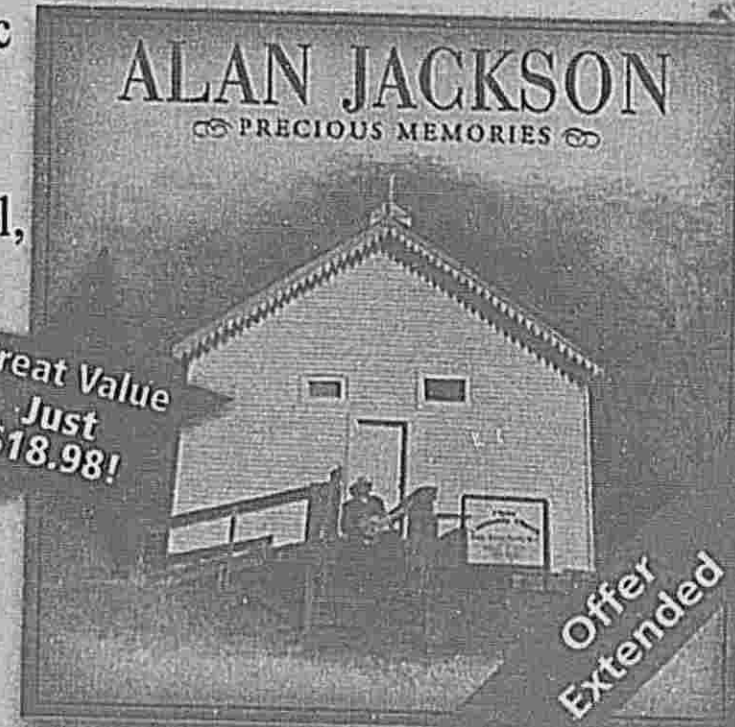
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## Tidbits

## Did You Know...

**ILLINOIS**—An 1850s authentic working Dutch windmill, Fabyan Windmill, whirls in the Fabyan Forest Preserve in Geneva (pop. 19,515). The five-story windmill was featured on a 1980 U.S. postage stamp.

**INDIANA**—South Whitley (pop. 1,782) is small, but it's a true party town. Home to Stumps—the world's largest supplier of prom and party goods—the company makes mascot costumes, parade float kits, rhinestone tiaras, crepe paper and custom banners. Founded in 1926, Stumps changed its name in September to ShindigZ, the World's Largest Party Superstore.

**IOWA**—Trappist monks at the New Melleray Abbey in Peosta (pop. 651) are well known for their high-quality handcrafted wooden caskets, made from timber harvested from their own forest.

**KANSAS**—Jakub Voboril, 17, made perfect scores on two major college entrance exams this year: a 36 on the American College Testing exam (ACT) and a 2400 on the SAT Reasoning Test. A senior this year at Bishop Carroll Catholic High School in Wichita, Voboril hasn't decided what he'll study in college, but is considering math, philosophy and law.

**MICHIGAN**—"King of the Countdowns" Casey Kasem hosted *Casey Kasem's American Top 40* on the radio from 1970 to 2004. The Detroit native began his radio career as an actor on *The Lone Ranger* during his college years.

**MINNESOTA**—Homesteader and prospector Cuyler Adams discovered iron ore in 1904 in central Minnesota and named the Cuyuna Range of iron mines by combining the first three letters of his name with the name of his constant companion, his St. Bernard, Una.

**MISSOURI**—In 1931, newly widowed Irma Rombauer of St. Louis needed to support her family and self-published 3,000 copies of *The Joy of Cooking*. Seventy-five years later, her book has sold millions of copies and remains a hit in the kitchen.

**NEBRASKA**—Built in 1856, the Old Presbyterian Church in Bellevue (pop. 44,382) is one of the state's oldest churches and boasts stained-glass windows and original oak pews.

**NORTH DAKOTA**—A larger-than-life statue of Meriwether Lewis' pet dog, Seaman, stands watch

over the Missouri River at Fort Mandan in Washburn (pop. 1,389). The Newfoundland dog accompanied the 1804-1806 Lewis and Clark Expedition.

**OHIO**—Media mogul Ted Turner was born in 1938 in Cincinnati. In 1980, the businessman and philanthropist launched Cable News Network (CNN), the first live, in-depth, round-the-clock news television network. He founded WTBS, which pioneered the superstation concept in cable television, and he also originated the Goodwill Games as an international, world-class, multi-sport competition.

**SOUTH DAKOTA**—At an elevation of more than 4,400 feet, Bear Butte near Sturgis (pop. 6,442) long has been a sacred place for American Indians. On the hike to the top are bits of cloth tied to trees as prayer offerings.

**WISCONSIN**—Guests at the Taylor Inn Bed and Breakfast in Clear Lake (pop. 1,051) can stay in Aunt Bee's room, Opie's or Andy's. Marsha and Dave Scheuermann are such fans of *The Andy Griffith Show* that they've re-created the TV show's set as their own home and inn. ★

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## Hometown Recipes

# Make- Ahead Snacks

If the holiday time crunch has you wondering what snacks to have available for unexpected guests and on-the-go family members, consider these two no-fail, make-ahead recipes.

Julie Wesson, of Wilton Wis., sent us her recipe for Mushroom Mini-Muffins. These savory muffins are great as part of an elegant holiday buffet or to snack on in front of the television. And best of all, "The muffins can be frozen and re-warmed, which makes them handy," Wesson says.

With some snack crackers and Doris Sturgis' Garlic Cheese Roll, you'll be ready to serve a holiday hors d'oeuvre whenever friends stop by. The cheese roll will keep indefinitely in the refrigerator and can be removed and sliced when guests walk through the door, says Sturgis of Mt. Pleasant, Texas. If you don't want to use processed cheese, simply increase the amount of Cheddar to about 2 pounds and cream cheese to 4 ounces, keeping amounts of the other ingredients the same.

*American Profile* looks forward to receiving your favorite recipes and sharing them with our millions of readers across the nation. Send them to Hometown Recipes, American Profile, 341 Cool Springs Blvd., Suite 400, Franklin, TN 37067. ★

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**AmericanProfile.com**

## RECIPE: Mushroom Mini-Muffins

*American Profile*

Julie Wesson  
Wilton, Wis.

Photo: High Cotton  
Styling & Photography

## Mushroom Mini-Muffins

- ½ cup, plus 3 tablespoons, butter, divided
- 1 cup finely chopped sweet or Vidalia onion
- 1 pound portabella mushroom caps, finely chopped
- ¾ cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- ¼ cup shredded Swiss cheese
- ½ cup finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 2 egg yolks, beaten
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning
- 8 slices wheat bread

1. Preheat oven to 350F.
2. Melt 3 tablespoons butter in a large skillet over medium heat, add onions and mushrooms, and sauté 6 minutes or until softened. Remove from heat. Stir in cheeses, parsley, egg yolks, salt and Italian seasoning.
3. Melt ½ cup butter in a small saucepan. With a rolling pin, flatten each slice of bread and cut into four squares. Dip each square into melted butter and place in a mini-muffin cup. Top each with a tablespoon of mushroom mixture. Bake 20 to 25 minutes or until lightly browned. Serve warm. Garnish with extra cheese if desired. Serves 10 to 12.

## RECIPE: Garlic Cheese Roll

*American Profile*

Doris Sturgis  
Mt. Pleasant, Texas

Photo: David Daniel  
Styling: Mary Gail

## Garlic Cheese Roll

- 1½ pounds sharp Cheddar cheese
- ½ pound processed cheese (like Velveeta)
- 3 ounces cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup finely chopped pecans
- 1 teaspoon seasoning salt
- Garlic powder, to taste
- Chili powder
- Chopped fresh parsley
- Chopped pecans

1. Shred Cheddar and processed cheese into a bowl. Mix in cream cheese. Add pecans, seasoning salt and garlic powder; mix well.
2. Divide into three mounds. Roll each into a log about 2 inches in diameter. Roll one log in chili powder, one in parsley and one in pecans. Refrigerate several hours before serving.
3. Slice ¼-inch thick and serve with crackers. Serves 10 to 12.



Make some holiday magic.

**Campbell's**

## Green Bean Casserole

Prep: 10 min. Bake: 30 min.

2 cans (10 3/4 oz. each) Campbell's® Cream of Mushroom Soup (Regular or 25% Less Sodium)

1 cup milk

2 tsp. soy sauce

1/4 tsp. ground black pepper

8 cups cooked cut green beans

2 2/3 cups French's® French Fried Onions

1. Stir soup, milk, soy sauce, pepper, beans and 1 1/3 cups onions in a 3-qt. casserole.

2. Bake at 350°F. for 25 min. or until hot. Stir.

3. Top with remaining onions. Bake for 5 min. more. Makes 12 servings.



*Make it festive: Stir in a colorful 1/2 cup of chopped red pepper with the soup.*



*For cheese lovers: Add 1/2 cup shredded Cheddar with the soup and omit the soy sauce.*



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Casserole  
POSSIBILITIES



CampbellsKitchen.com



# Hometown Hero

by KAREN KARVONEN  
Photos by Joshua Lawton

## Enabling Disabled Skiers

Hal O'Leary, left, accompanies 11-year-old Michael Henshall, who has cerebral palsy, on the ski slope in Winter Park, Colo.

### Nothing thrills ski instructor

Hal O'Leary more than seeing a dozen empty wheelchairs parked at the base of the ski slopes in Winter Park, Colo. "I see people who are double amputees or paraplegics get out of their car, pull out their wheelchair and mono-ski (a molded seat mounted on a single ski with hand-held outrigger ski tips) and proceed to the lift all by themselves," O'Leary says.

Minutes later, they are whizzing down the runs using adaptive ski equipment that O'Leary helped develop. Since founding the National Sports Center for the Disabled (NSCD) in 1970, O'Leary has made it possible for thousands of kids and adults with close to 100 different disabilities—including birth defects, multiple sclerosis, autism, developmental disabilities and blindness—to enjoy the snow-covered slopes. Today, the NSCD gives more than 7,000 ski lessons a year, and other programs worldwide refer people to the center.

O'Leary, 68, vividly recalls teaching his very first adaptive ski les-

son—to 23 young amputees from Children's Hospital in Denver—in 1970. A ski instructor in Winter Park, he had volunteered to help the hospital's amputee program though, at the time, no specific method existed for teaching amputees to ski.

"It was a cold, miserable January day, and the kids were slipping and sliding," recalls O'Leary, who lives in nearby Fraser, Colo. (pop. 910). "After lunch I put them on the chair lift, and it was a melee at the top. But as we started working on the practice hill, they began moving on their own and squealing with excitement."

Ski instructor  
Hal O'Leary

O'Leary was hooked, and his new dream was to inspire and enable disabled individuals to enjoy the sport he loves.

He began to devise his own methods and equipment, developing the three-track system for amputees who use one ski and two outriggers, forearm crutches with ski tips mounted to the bases.

When teaching a child with spina bifida who had great difficulty standing, O'Leary

devised a contraption called the ski bra. "Larry's skis kept parting and going out, and he would fall forward," O'Leary says. "So I put a hole in the tips of the skis and threaded a bungee cord through them to stabilize them. He was able to ski and turn without falling, and now I see it used wherever I go."

A former coach of the U.S. Disabled Olympic Ski Team, O'Leary pioneered competitive racing for the disabled. One of his star pupils, David Jamison of Tabernash, Colo. (pop. 165), the 1982 U.S. world champion in the slalom category, went on to race competitively for 22 years.

A three-tracker with polio in his left leg, Jamison started skiing with O'Leary in 1971. "Without him, I wouldn't have gotten to the level of skiing I did, and the racing program wouldn't have become world class," Jamison says.

Despite O'Leary's success with his students, his first 10 years were a struggle. "People who felt that skiing was for the 'able-bodied' criticized me,"



The smile says, "What a ride!"





O'Leary says. That mindset changed, however, after his adaptive ski program was featured on the *Today* and *Good Morning America* television shows and began to gain national recognition.

In the last 36 years, O'Leary not only has enabled thousands to ski, he's touched lives and changed their course. Susan Hildebrecht of Boulder, Colo., who has cerebral palsy and skis with a ski bra and two outriggers, took lessons from O'Leary as a 16-year-old in 1977. "Hal is a phenomenal teacher with a sixth sense. He can tell you, 'Let's do this,' and nine



Anticipation builds on the ride to the top. out of 10 times, it works," she says.

With O'Leary's support and encouragement, Hildebrecht passed the Professional Ski Instructors of America course and taught in Winter Park's adaptive ski program for 15 years.

"Hal's teaching goes beyond skiing," says Jamison, who now works in real estate. "He's been a coach, a mentor and a friend. He has taught me that I could achieve anything I put my mind to, and that has helped me be successful in my business."

As adaptive skiing gained momentum, O'Leary has traveled worldwide to help establish programs for the disabled and is a recipient of the prestigious Professional Ski Instructor of America Lifetime Achievement Award. But he still gets the most satisfaction out of seeing a kid who walks with crutches glide down a slope with a big grin on his face.

"I've gotten a lot more out of this than I have put in over these 36 years," O'Leary says. "And I'll keep on teaching as long as I am upright." ☆

Karen Karvonen is a writer based in Englewood, Colo.

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## People with COPD breathe better with SPIRIVA.

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- ▲ Helps you breathe better for a full 24 hours by keeping airways open
- ▲ Is not a steroid

SPIRIVA does not replace fast-acting inhalers for sudden symptoms. Tell your doctor about your medicines, including eye drops, and illnesses like glaucoma and urinary or prostate problems. These may worsen with SPIRIVA. Stop taking SPIRIVA and contact your doctor at once if you have vision changes, eye pain, sudden breathing problems, hives, or swelling of the throat or tongue. Side effects may include dry mouth, constipation, and problems passing urine.

SPIRIVA is one of several treatment options that you and your doctor can consider, along with making lifestyle changes. For more information, call 1.877.SPIRIVA or visit [spiriva.com](http://spiriva.com)

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# **SPIRIVA<sup>®</sup> HandiHaler<sup>®</sup>** (tiotropium bromide inhalation powder)

## **SPIRIVA<sup>®</sup> HandiHaler<sup>®</sup>** (tiotropium bromide inhalation powder)

For Oral Inhalation Only

Brief Summary of Prescribing Information

### INDICATIONS AND USAGE

SPIRIVA HandiHaler (tiotropium bromide inhalation powder) is indicated for the long-term, once-daily, maintenance treatment of bronchospasm associated with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), including chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

### CONTRAINDICATIONS

SPIRIVA HandiHaler (tiotropium bromide inhalation powder) is contraindicated in patients with a history of hypersensitivity to atropine or its derivatives, including ipratropium, or to any component of this product.

### WARNINGS

SPIRIVA HandiHaler (tiotropium bromide inhalation powder) is intended as a once-daily maintenance treatment for COPD and is not indicated for the initial treatment of acute episodes of bronchospasm, i.e., rescue therapy.

Immediate hypersensitivity reactions, including anaphylaxis, may occur after administration of SPIRIVA. If such a reaction occurs, therapy with SPIRIVA should be stopped at once and alternative treatments should be considered.

Inhaled medicines, including SPIRIVA, may cause paradoxical bronchospasm. If this occurs, treatment with SPIRIVA should be stopped and other treatments considered.

### PRECAUTIONS

#### General

As an anticholinergic drug, SPIRIVA (tiotropium bromide inhalation powder) may potentially worsen symptoms and signs associated with narrow-angle glaucoma, prostatic hyperplasia or bladder-neck obstruction and should be used with caution in patients with any of these conditions.

As a predominantly renally excreted drug, patients with moderate to severe renal impairment (creatinine clearance of  $\leq 50$  mL/min) treated with SPIRIVA should be monitored closely (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY, Pharmacokinetics, Special Populations, Renally-impaired Patients).

#### Information for Patients

It is important for patients to understand how to correctly administer SPIRIVA capsules using the HandiHaler inhalation device (see Patient's Instructions for Use). SPIRIVA capsules should only be administered via the HandiHaler device and the HandiHaler device should not be used for administering other medications.

Capsules should always be stored in sealed blisters and only removed immediately before use. The blister strip should be carefully opened to expose only one capsule at a time. Open the blister foil as far as the STOP line to remove only one capsule at a time. The drug should be used immediately after the packaging over an individual capsule is opened, or else its effectiveness may be reduced. Capsules that are inadvertently exposed to air (i.e., not intended for immediate use) should be discarded.

Eye pain or discomfort, blurred vision, visual halos or colored images in association with red eyes from conjunctival congestion and corneal edema may be signs of acute narrow-angle glaucoma. Should any of these signs and symptoms develop, consult a physician immediately. Miotic eye drops alone are not considered to be effective treatment.

Care must be taken not to allow the powder to enter into the eyes as this may cause blurring of vision and pupil dilation.

SPIRIVA HandiHaler is a once-daily maintenance bronchodilator and should not be used for immediate relief of breathing problems, i.e., as a rescue medication.

#### Drug Interactions

SPIRIVA has been used concomitantly with other drugs commonly used in COPD without increases in adverse drug reactions. These include sympathomimetic bronchodilators, methylxanthines, and oral and inhaled steroids. However, the co-administration of SPIRIVA with other anticholinergic-containing drugs (e.g., ipratropium) has not been studied and is therefore not recommended.

#### Drug/Laboratory Test Interactions

None known.

#### Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility

No evidence of tumorigenicity was observed in a 104-week inhalation study in rats at tiotropium doses up to 0.059 mg/kg/day, in an 83-week inhalation study in female mice at doses up to 0.145 mg/kg/day, and in a 101-week inhalation study in male mice at doses up to 0.002 mg/kg/day. These doses correspond to 25, 35, and 0.5 times the Recommended Human Daily Dose (RHDD) on a mg/m<sup>2</sup> basis, respectively. These dose multiples may be over-estimated due to difficulties in measuring deposited doses in animal inhalation studies.

Tiotropium bromide demonstrated no evidence of mutagenicity or clastogenicity in the following assays: the bacterial gene mutation assay, the V79 Chinese hamster cell mutagenesis assay, the chromosomal aberration assays in human lymphocytes *in vitro* and mouse micronucleus formation *in vivo*, and the unscheduled DNA synthesis in primary rat hepatocytes *in vitro* assay.

In rats, decreases in the number of corpora lutea and the percentage of implants were noted at inhalation tiotropium doses of 0.078 mg/kg/day or greater (approximately 35 times the RHDD on a mg/m<sup>2</sup> basis). No such effects were observed at 0.009 mg/kg/day (approximately 4 times the RHDD on a mg/m<sup>2</sup> basis). The fertility index, however, was not affected at inhalation doses up to 1.689 mg/kg/day (approximately 760 times the RHDD on a mg/m<sup>2</sup> basis). These dose multiples may be over-estimated due to difficulties in measuring deposited doses in animal inhalation studies.

#### Pregnancy

##### Pregnancy Category C

No evidence of structural alterations was observed in rats and rabbits at inhalation tiotropium doses of up to 1.471 and 0.007 mg/kg/day, respectively. These doses correspond to approximately 660 and 6 times the recommended human daily dose (RHDD) on a mg/m<sup>2</sup> basis. However, in rats, fetal resorption, litter loss, decreases in the number of live pups at birth and the mean pup weights, and a delay in pup sexual maturation were observed at inhalation tiotropium doses of  $\geq 0.078$  mg/kg (approximately 35 times the RHDD on a mg/m<sup>2</sup> basis). In rabbits, an increase in post-implantation loss was observed at an inhalation dose of 0.4 mg/kg/day (approximately 360 times the RHDD on a mg/m<sup>2</sup> basis). Such effects were not observed at inhalation doses of 0.009 and up to 0.088 mg/kg/day in rats and rabbits, respectively. These doses correspond to approximately 4 and 80 times the RHDD on a mg/m<sup>2</sup> basis, respectively. These dose multiples may be over-estimated due to difficulties in measuring deposited doses in animal inhalation studies.

There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. SPIRIVA should be used during pregnancy only if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus.

#### Use in Labor and Delivery

The safety and effectiveness of SPIRIVA has not been studied during labor and delivery.

#### Nursing Mothers

Clinical data from nursing women exposed to tiotropium are not available. Based on lactating rodent studies, tiotropium is excreted into breast milk. It is not known whether tiotropium is excreted in human milk, but because many drugs are excreted in human milk and given these findings in rats, caution should be exercised if SPIRIVA is administered to a nursing woman.

#### Pediatric Use

SPIRIVA HandiHaler is approved for use in the maintenance treatment of bronchospasm associated with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, including chronic bronchitis and emphysema. This disease does not normally occur in children. The safety and effectiveness of SPIRIVA in pediatric patients have not been established.

#### Geriatric Use

Of the total number of patients who received SPIRIVA in the 1-year clinical trials, 426 were  $\leq 65$  years, 375 were 65-74 years and 105 were  $\geq 75$  years of age. Within each age subgroup, there were no differences between the proportion of patients with adverse events in the SPIRIVA and the comparator groups for most events. Dry mouth increased with age in the SPIRIVA group (differences from placebo were 9.0%, 17.1%, and 16.2% in the aforementioned age subgroups). A higher frequency of constipation and urinary tract infections with increasing age was observed in the SPIRIVA group in the placebo-controlled studies. The differences from placebo for constipation were 0%, 1.8%, and 7.6% for each of the age groups. The differences from placebo for urinary tract infections were -0.6%, 4.6% and 4.5%. No overall differences in effectiveness were observed among these groups. Based on available data, no adjustment of SPIRIVA dosage in geriatric patients is warranted.

#### ADVERSE REACTIONS

Of the 2,663 patients in the four 1-year and two 6-month controlled clinical trials, 1,308 were treated with SPIRIVA (tiotropium bromide inhalation powder) at the recommended dose of 18 mcg once a day. Patients with narrow angle glaucoma, or symptomatic prostatic hypertrophy or bladder outlet obstruction were excluded from these trials.

The most commonly reported adverse drug reaction was dry mouth. Dry mouth was usually mild and often resolved during continued treatment. Other reactions reported in individual patients and consistent with possible anticholinergic effects included constipation, increased heart rate, blurred vision, glaucoma, urinary difficulty, and urinary retention.

Four multicenter, 1-year, controlled studies evaluated SPIRIVA in patients with COPD. Table 1 shows all adverse events that occurred with a frequency of  $\geq 3\%$  in the SPIRIVA group in the 1-year placebo-controlled trials where the rates in the SPIRIVA group exceeded placebo by  $\geq 1\%$ . The frequency of corresponding events in the ipratropium-controlled trials is included for comparison.

Table 1: Adverse Experience Incidence (% Patients) in One-Year-COPD Clinical Trials

Body System (Event)	Placebo-Controlled Trials		Ipratropium-Controlled Trials	
	SPIRIVA (n=550)	Placebo (n=371)	SPIRIVA (n=356)	Ipratropium (n=179)
<b>Body as a Whole</b>				
Accidents	13	11	5	8
Chest Pain (non-specific)	7	5	5	2
Edema, Dependent	5	4	3	5
<b>Gastrointestinal System Disorders</b>				
Abdominal Pain	5	3	6	6
Constipation	4	2	1	1
Dry Mouth	16	3	12	6
Dyspepsia	6	5	1	1
Vomiting	4	2	1	2
<b>Musculoskeletal System</b>				
Myalgia	4	3	4	3
<b>Resistance Mechanism Disorders</b>				
Infection	4	3	1	3
Moniliasis	4	2	3	2
<b>Respiratory System (upper)</b>				
Epistaxis	4	2	1	1
Pharyngitis	9	7	7	3
Rhinitis	6	5	3	2
Sinusitis	11	9	3	2
Upper Respiratory Tract Infection	41	37	43	35
<b>Skin and Appendage Disorders</b>				
Rash	4	2	2	2
<b>Urinary System</b>				
Urinary Tract Infection	7	5	4	2

Arthritis, coughing, and influenza-like symptoms occurred at a rate of  $\geq 3\%$  in the SPIRIVA treatment group, but were  $\leq 1\%$  in excess of the placebo group.

Other events that occurred in the SPIRIVA group at a frequency of 1-3% in the placebo-controlled trials where the rates exceeded that in the placebo group include: **Body as a Whole:** allergic reaction, leg pain; **Central and Peripheral Nervous System:** dysphonia, paresthesia; **Gastrointestinal System Disorders:** gastrointestinal disorder not otherwise specified (NOS), gastroesophageal reflux, stomatitis (including ulcerative stomatitis); **Metabolic and Nutritional Disorders:** hypercholesterolemia, hyperglycemia; **Musculoskeletal System Disorders:** skeletal pain; **Cardiac Events:** angina pectoris (including aggravated angina pectoris); **Psychiatric Disorder:** depression; **Infections:** herpes zoster; **Respiratory System Disorder (Upper):** laryngitis; **Vision Disorder:** cataract. In addition, among the adverse events observed in the clinical trials with an incidence of  $\leq 1\%$  were atrial fibrillation, supraventricular tachycardia, angioedema, and urinary retention.

In the 1-year trials, the incidence of dry mouth, constipation, and urinary tract infection increased with age (see PRECAUTIONS, Geriatric Use).

Two multicenter, 6-month, controlled studies evaluated SPIRIVA in patients with COPD. The adverse events and the incidence rates were similar to those seen in the 1-year controlled trials.

The following adverse reactions have been identified during worldwide post-approval use of SPIRIVA: dizziness, epistaxis, hoarseness, palpitations, pruritus, tachycardia, throat irritation, and urticaria.

#### DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION

The recommended dosage of SPIRIVA HandiHaler (tiotropium bromide inhalation powder) is the inhalation of the contents of one SPIRIVA capsule, once-daily, with the HandiHaler inhalation device (see Patient's Instructions for Use).

No dosage adjustment is required for geriatric, hepatically-impaired, or renally-impaired patients. However, patients with moderate to severe renal impairment given SPIRIVA should be monitored closely (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY, Pharmacokinetics, Special Populations and PRECAUTIONS).

SPIRIVA capsules are for inhalation only and must not be swallowed.

#### HOW SUPPLIED

The following packages are available:

carton containing 6 SPIRIVA capsules (1 blister card) and 1 HandiHaler inhalation device

(NDC 0597-0075-06)

carton containing 30 SPIRIVA capsules (5 blister cards) and 1 HandiHaler inhalation device

(NDC 0597-0075-37)

(Continued from page 7)

Still, the poinsettia remains Ecke Ranch's signature product and, though sold only six weeks a year, is the world's top-selling potted flowering plant. Each year, the company's 1,000 employees in the United States, Guatemala and Mexico breed and produce more than 50 million poinsettia cuttings in 60 varieties under 100 acres of greenhouses.

"We can't rest on our laurels," says Paul III, whose grandfather and father died in 1991 and 2002, respectively, and entrusted the family business to him. "At the end of the day, you have to have more than heritage and name recognition. You have to have a good product. I'm reminded of that with every shipment." ★

Visit [www.ecke.com](http://www.ecke.com) for more information.

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# Finding a Good Contractor

by KATIE AND GENE HAMILTON

**Finding a good professional home contractor**—from an independent handyman to large-scale builder—is not always a speedy process. But investing the time to find the right contractor for the job is time well spent. Here are some tips to help separate the good from the bad.

**Word of mouth**—Most contractors say their best advertisement is “word of mouth” from satisfied customers. So begin the process by asking friends and relatives if they know a good tradesman they’d recommend.

**Start looking**—Drive around your neighborhood. If you see a dazzling new deck on a house, knock on the door and ask the homeowners if they’re pleased with the results. Also look at houses under renovation that are similar in style to your own. Since some contractors specialize in old house restoration, while others work on newer homes, look for a professional with experience doing the type of remodeling you want. Most contractors include contact information on the side of their work trucks.

“Talk to neighbors and watch the progress of the job in your neighborhood,” says Paul Winans, a contractor who runs Winans Construction in Oakland, Calif. If the project moves along and the site is well maintained, the company probably is well run.

**Use the Internet**—Go online to [www.nari.org](http://www.nari.org), a website for the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI)—a trade group of professional remodelers. The website features “Find a Professional Remodeler,” which allows you to type in your zip code and get a list of trade group members who are contractors in your area.

The Internet offers another approach to finding a local contractor. Type “contractor referral” in a search engine such as Google and you’ll find numerous websites designed as a matchmaker between homeowners and plumbers, remodelers, builders or other home service professionals. The service usually is free to customers.

**Hit the stores**—Let local home center stores act as your general contractor and find a tradesman for a job. Walk the aisles and you’ll notice “Installed Price” signs on many of the building materials, appliances and fixtures they sell. For example, a tag on laminate flooring may read: “Installed \$4.50 per square foot.” This service is particularly helpful because it puts a dollar value to the labor cost. However, it usually doesn’t include the cost of preparation work needed (such as removing an existing floor before a new installation). This turnkey service is popular for consumers short on time.

**Go where the pros shop**—Don’t overlook materials suppliers where professionals shop. For example, stop at a plumbing supply store if you need a plumber and ask if they know a good one. They may not recommend someone specifically, but they probably will tell you which plumbers are steady customers. A tradesman with plenty of customers is most likely a good one.

**Do your homework**—When you make contact with a contractor, ask a lot of questions. Request a list of clients in your area and call them. Look at samples of their work. If yours is a large remodeling project, ask to see comparable work the contractor has done. Ask to see their state and locally issued contractor’s license and how long they’ve been in business. If everything checks out fine, then make sure to get everything in writing before any dust flies.

Finding a good contractor requires a lot of preliminary footwork, but the payoff is hiring a professional who does the job right, on time and on budget. ★

*Katie and Gene Hamilton are authors of **Carpentry for Dummies**.*



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**SPECIAL PRIZE OF \$250.00** will be awarded to one recipe that uses Original French’s Fried Onions.



**Send in Your Favorite Get-Together Recipe by March 1, 2007**

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**PLEASE NOTE:** One recipe per envelope, please. Include a color photo of yourself. Please tell us about the get-together you’ve shared your recipe.

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## "Foods that 'EXPLODE' in Your Bowel!"



## Plain Answers about IBS, Constipation, Diarrhea, Heartburn, Ulcers, and More!

(By Frank K. Wood)

If you suffer from bloating, abdominal cramps, chronic constipation/diarrhea, varicose leg veins, digestive spasms, fatigue, or symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), you need *The Complete Guide to Digestive Health*, an informative new book just released to the public by FC&A Medical Publishing® in Peachtree City, Georgia.

Intestinal problems? Learn about important new research discoveries that identify which foods are your allies and which foods are your enemies, including information about what you should avoid drinking. Discover what you can do to clean out your intestines, ease stress, and calm your digestive system. And find out how you can soothe an irritable bowel just by sipping this beverage.

The authors provide many health tips with full explanations.

- ▶ Make these simple changes and be rid of gas!
- ▶ Belching and bloating — they could be warning signs of up to 7 hidden health problems.
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# LAST MINUTE GIFTS

## 2006

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- Easy E's of the Season **Pg. 3**
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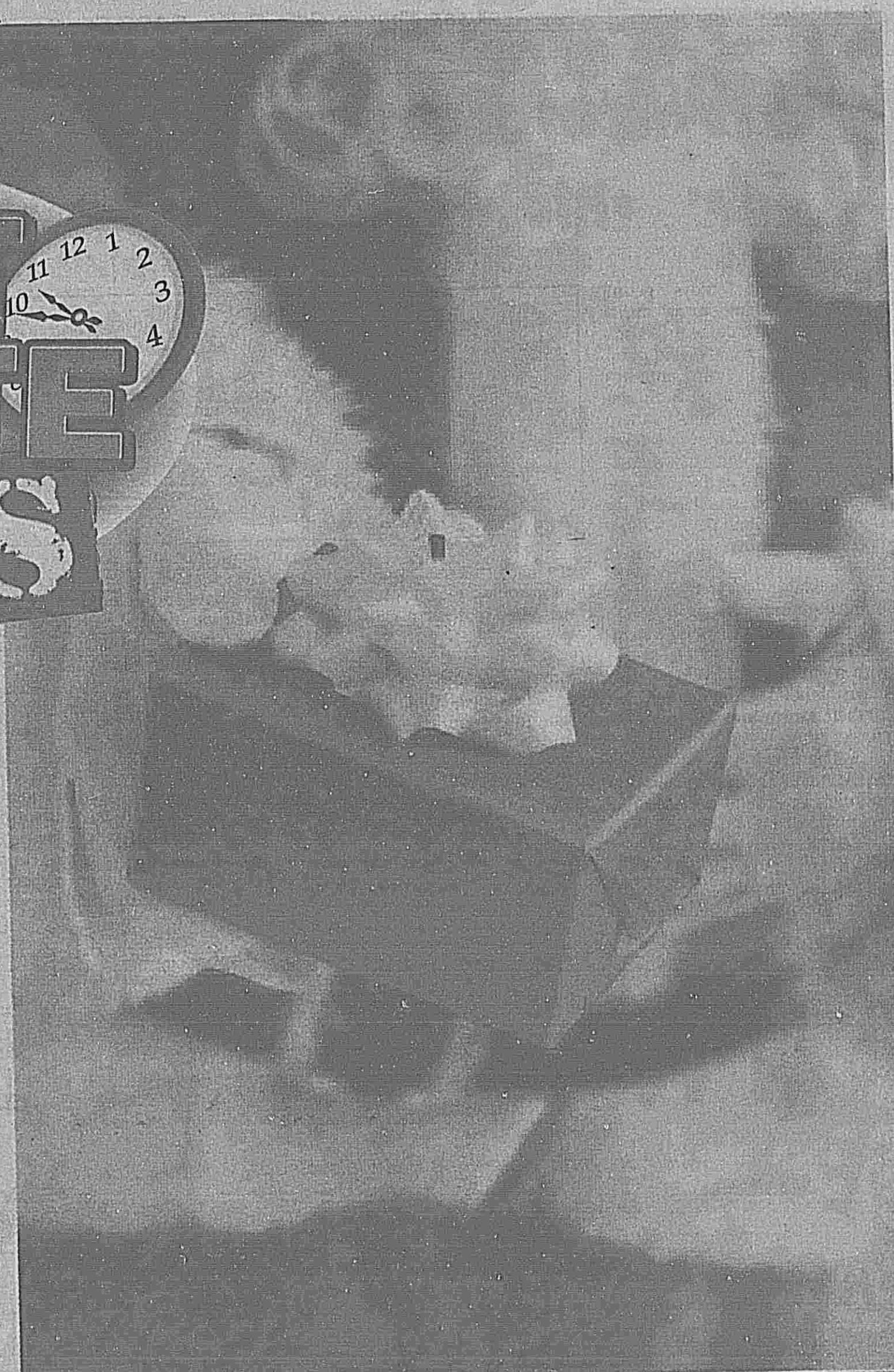
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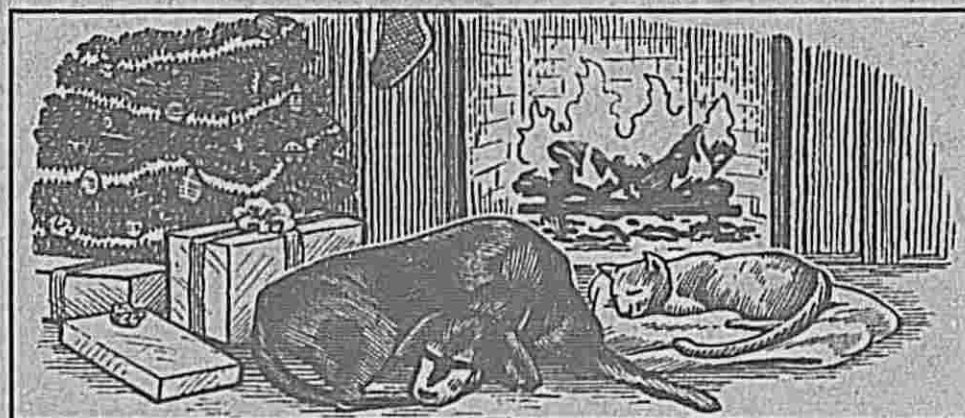


# Don't forget the family pets this holiday season

Everyone enjoys getting something special during the holiday season, whether it's a child opening a gift from Santa or a parent opening the first gift their child's ever made just for them.

That's a fact that even extends to the family pet. While most people endure long lines at the malls and endless Internet searches for the right gift, pets often get less attention during the busy holiday season. Such a reality makes finding the right holiday gift for your pet all the more important. After all, no one's as loyal as the dog, cat or bird, so reward that loyalty this holiday season with a gift. For those looking to make this holiday a memorable one for their favorite four-legged friend, consider the following gift ideas.

• A new bed. A domestic pet's life is certainly a good one. Most cats and dogs lie around the house or apartment all day and take frequent naps. While that's certainly something their owners could envy, especially during the time-pressed holiday season, it can do a number on



your pet's bed. Chances are, your pet looks at his bed much as you look at yours. Reward your pet with a new bed, complete with all the comforts he deserves.

• Clothes. As pets have become more popular and pampered over the years, pet clothing lines have begun to pop up in stores nationwide. But what many people might not know is that clothing for pets is as functional as it is fun. Much as humans feel the cold come winter, pets can get very cold as well. Simply because they're covered in hair doesn't mean they're well-insulated. Try getting your pet a hooded sweatshirt for colder climates or a T-shirt if you live

in a warmer area. There are also booties that will protect your dog's paws from snow and ice, which could irritate the paw pads.

• Food. A big part of many holiday celebrations is food, hence the reason most people pack on a few extra pounds come the holiday season. While you won't want to feed your pet cakes or candies, try giving him some new flavored treats, or perhaps even a helping of the holiday meal. Be sure to consult your veterinarian before feeding your pet any human food, however, as certain foods you might not expect could actually prove harmful to your cat or dog.

## Get wrapped up in gift wrapping

Of all the occasions during the year, the holiday season certainly puts your gift-wrapping techniques to the test. With dozens of presents to trim, tape and tinsel, you'd best know how to wrap a gift correctly. If you can use a little gift-wrapping help, consult these step-by-step tips and you'll be an expert in no time.

1. Have all of your materials within reach. You'll need gift wrap (paper on a roll presents a more polished looking finished product than pre-cut wrapping paper squares, which often leave deep creases), translucent tape, scissors, gift tags, bows/ribbons, if desired.

2. Rectangular gift boxes are the easiest to wrap, so if your gift is an awkward shape, try placing it in a gift box first. Place the box on a table alongside the gift wrap and pull out enough wrapping paper to wrap it widthwise around the box with 2 inches of slack. Also make sure there is enough wrapping paper at each end of the box to cover the ends completely when the wrapping paper will be folded over them. It's better to overestimate than underestimate these amounts; you can always cut off the excess.

3. Mark the length of paper you

need with a pencil, and cut straight across.

4. Place your gift box face-down on the paper. Pull up one edge of the paper on the long sides of the box and tape to the center of the box. Do the same on the other side, but fold the paper down about an inch to form a neat edge and then secure with tape.

5. Visually gauge the amount of paper you have at each end of the gift boxes (the shorter ends of the box). Trim away any extra paper so that the remaining flaps are long enough to cover the box, but short enough to fold over smoothly into flaps.

6. Turn the box so that one short end is facing you. Grasp the left and right edges of the wrapping paper and push the sides in so that top and bottom flaps are formed in a "V" shape. Make sure the edges are pushed in as far as they will go without ripping the paper. Tape the edges to the box. Repeat the process with the other short end of the box.

7. If you are affixing ribbon, make sure that the box is face up with the clean side of the wrapping paper showing (taped, crease side is down). Pull out a long length of ribbon and cut.

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# Easy 'E's' of the Season

## 10 tips for an enjoyable, easy and enlightened holiday shopping experience

Seeing the smile on a loved one's face after opening a gift on their list is quite possibly the most rewarding aspect of the holiday season. Even though it isn't a surprise to them, that doesn't diminish the pure glee one gets from actually receiving it!

If the journey you experience to get that smile seems like an uphill climb, it doesn't have to be. With the right tools and preparation, you can get that ultimate gift by spending less time and money. Like the Andy Williams song says, "It's the most wonderful time of the year." Enjoy it! Here are 10 tips for a more enjoyable, easy and enlightened holiday shopping season:

**1. Be a multi-channel shopper** — Browse stores, catalogs, newspapers, and then conduct an online shopping search to find the item you want at the best price, in stock and with shipping information. Gift buyers who visit sites like Shopzilla often find aggressively priced merchandise, and where that perfect gift is in stock vs. sold out.

**2. Find a regional specialty item** — Online shopping is an easy way to find and then buy a gift reminiscent of a favorite vacation or an old stomping ground. You don't need to live somewhere to buy the trademark product of that area.

**3. Shop at the times most convenient and least hectic** —

Stores never close when you shop online. You can shop 24/7/365 — after you put the kids to bed, late at night, or before going to work.

**4. Save money on gas** — Organize shopping outings to stores by neighborhood and also fit in an errand or two if possible. Or, stay at home and do your shopping on your computer and skip the car trip all together.

**5. Look for holiday specials on shipping and handling** — Shipping charges add up, so be sure to find out exactly how much it will cost or find merchants who offer free or discount shipping incentives. Online comparison shopping Web sites will feature promotional shipping options and also provide total costs including tax and shipping.

**6. Figure out the "must-have" gift** — If your holiday gift list has everyone on it, from parents to friends to coworkers, you might want to flip through the magazines they read or log onto the Web sites and blogs they visit to find out what's hot.

**7. Know what you're buying** — If you want to buy a gift that you know little or nothing about, go to the experts to find the best product for your money. In addition to going to your local retail store and asking a wildly busy sales person, you can also go to a Web site like [www.shopzilla.com](http://www.shopzilla.com) to read con-

sumer and expert reviews.

**8. Know where to find coupons** — Holiday shopping requires you to stretch your dollars and might even test your networking skills. Beside coupons found in catalogs, newspapers and online, you might be so bold as to ask a family member, friend or colleague about taking advantage of "friends and family" shopping specials or passes that they might have access to. Events for employees and their friends often net greater discounts.

**9. Find the "hard to find" gift** — You can put miles on your car. You can run up your phone bill. Or, you can master the art of online shopping and find that perfect but impossible-to-find gift. Tap into communities by visiting message boards to find out availability and suggested pricing for special items. Going the extra mile can keep you from literally going an extra mile.

**10. Keep an eye on the calendar** — As Christmas and Hanukkah approach, the streets, malls and stores get more congested. Your stress level goes up a notch and products are harder to find. Avoid this stress! Shop online — early and often. But, be sure to allow enough time for your gifts to be delivered.

Armed with this information, you too can shop like an expert, saving time and money while finding and purchasing the perfect gift for everyone on your list.



Thanks to the Internet, holiday shopping can now be done from the comforts of home.

## Tips for first-time holiday hosts

Thinking about hosting a holiday party this season? Whether for 10 or 100 guests, even a novice can pull off a holiday party to remember, event planners say.

**The key: Plan ahead.**

This will help to avoid some common blunders of first-time party hosts, such as underestimating the guest count, running out of food or drinks or even breaking city noise ordinances, which may have the police on your doorstep. An event planning company that provides step-by-step plans for hosting a party.

One of the most common mistakes is when hosts put out too many chairs or tables. A party that should be 'move-around' [then] becomes sit-down and boring.

Instead, aim for a party where no one wants to leave, everyone is talking, eating, drinking, sharing stories, making new friends and enjoying great food, themed desserts and maybe even some fun activities.

**Step 1: Determine a budget.**

Create a budget that takes into account decorations, invitations, food and drink. If your budget gets too bloated. Asking friends or guests to bring some food or having beer and wine, which is less expensive than a full bar.

**Step 2: Decide the number of guests.**

Make a wish list of whom you plan to invite and make sure you have the room or can rent a space to accommodate everyone. Then, send out invitations early and show off your creativity. Because you're likely competing with many other holiday parties.

**Step 3: Develop a party plan.**

What foods will you serve? Are you cooking or catering in? Are you holding a holiday open house, a sit-down dinner, potluck or a buffet?

Consider such questions to come up with a detailed plan. If you're baking, make up a schedule

to coordinate all the work and time involved. If you're ordering any specialty items, do so in advance so you're not left with starving guests. Also, a theme — such as candyland or winter wonderland — can help tie a party together.

Coming up with something to break the ice, especially if a lot of your guests have never met, is essential. Some activities may include decorating cookies, caroling or a gift exchange.

**Step 4: Prepare.**

Don't wait until the day-of to tackle your to-do list. Make a list of what needs to be done and do as much as you can beforehand, such as decorating, assembling tableware and most of the baking.

**Step 5: Enjoy.**

Don't get lost in the details during the party.

As host, you should be making introductions and refilling the food and bar.

Make everyone comfortable.

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## Picture this photo cube: Make it in an hour, cherish it forever

**S**crapbooking has gone dimensional and this easy-to-make photo memory cube is a great way to display your favorite photos. Pretty papers, a few scrapbook embellishments, and an hour are all you'll need. It's a great way to celebrate a special someone, a new baby, a graduation, milestone anniversary or a favorite friendship.

The cube is a great gift idea, too. Modify the look by changing the papers and embellishments—soft pink for a baby girl, or bright primary colors for a little one's birthday photos. Showcase favorite wedding photos using a combination of white and off-white patterned papers.

### PHOTO MEMORY CUBE

Makes 1 cube

- Styrofoam: 5" cube
- Solid card stock: two, 12" x 12" sheets; additional scraps
- Decorative papers: two, 12" x 12" sheets
- Photos: four to six
- Scrapbook embellishments of your choice: stickers, brads, metal words, tags, ribbons
- Thick, white craft glue

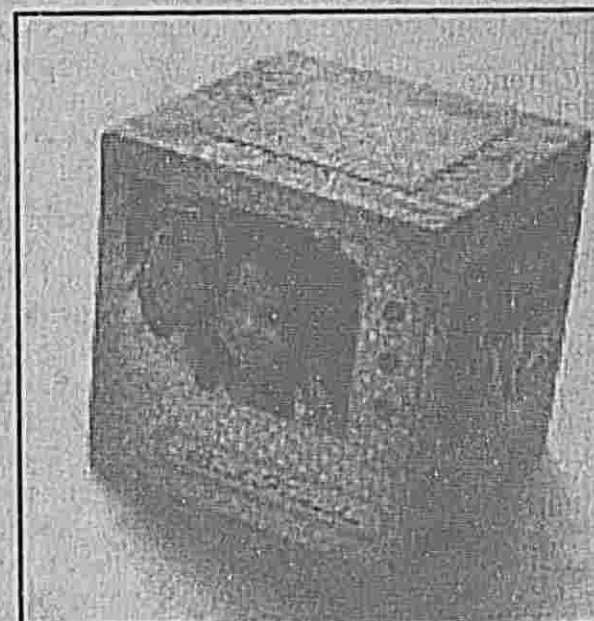
### Make it fast:

1. Overlap the two solid card stock papers 1 inch; glue.
2. Cut two 5-inch strips from glued length of paper. Wrap strips around cube in opposite directions, creasing at corners. Glue to cube to secure.
3. Repeat Step 1 using decorative papers. Cut 1-inch decorative paper strips; wrap around cube like ribbon on a present and glue.
4. Mat photos on card stock scraps; adhere one photo to each side of cube.
5. Embellish cube with stickers, brads, metal words, tags and ribbons, as desired. You'll find many more fast and fun holiday ideas in the free, 16-page project booklet "Simple Holiday Style," included in the November issue of Crafts 'n Things magazine at select Wal-Mart stores. The free booklet is brought to you by The Dow Chemical Company, manufacturer of genuine STYROFOAM brand foam for more than 50 years. Year-round, look for additional creative inspiration on [www.styrofoamcrafts.com](http://www.styrofoamcrafts.com) and [www.styrofoamflorals.com](http://www.styrofoamflorals.com). These Web sites are packed with hundreds of project ideas and step-by-step instructions for holidays and home décor, and new ideas for centerpieces, wreaths, topiaries, parties.



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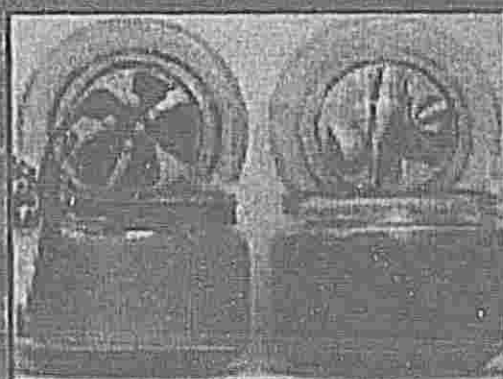


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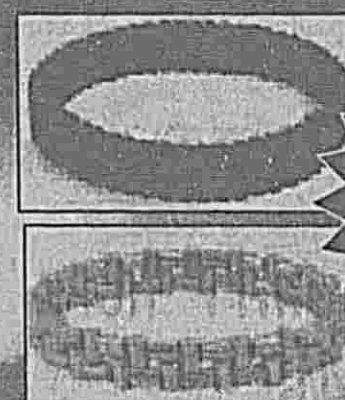
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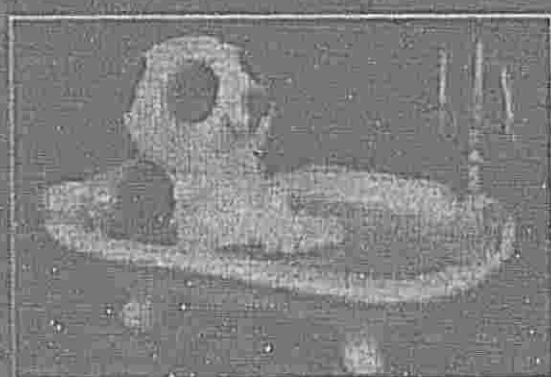
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## Christmas Movie Trivia

How much do you know about your favorite yuletide movies and television specials? See how many answers you can guess correctly.

1. In "Home Alone," young Kevin is forgotten at home when his entire family rushes to a vacation in \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. New York  
b. Great Britain  
c. Florida  
d. Paris
2. "Miracle on 34th Street" focuses on what renowned department store?  
a. Macy's  
b. Lord & Taylor  
c. Neiman Marcus  
d. Saks Fifth Avenue
3. George Bailey's guardian angel in "It's a Wonderful Life" is named \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. Tom  
b. Clarence  
c. Charlie  
d. Carmine
4. In what movie does Ralphie request a Red Rider BB Gun for Christmas?  
a. "A Christmas Carol"  
b. "A Christmas Story"  
c. "It's a Wonderful Life"  
d. "Bad Santa"
5. What comedian starred in "The Santa Clause"?  
a. Bill Cosby  
b. Howie Mandel  
c. Tim Allen  
d. Jon Stewart
6. Where was the movie "White Christmas" with Bing Crosby set?  
a. Colorado  
b. Montana  
c. New Hampshire  
d. Vermont
7. What mythic character makes an appearance in the animated classic "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer"?  
a. Abominable Snowman  
b. Bigfoot  
c. Loch Ness Monster  
d. Dragon

Answers: 1. d 2. a 3. b 4. b 5. c 6. d 7. a

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## Make holiday travel easier to handle

**M**ost people would prefer to have their friends and family in close proximity during the holidays. Unfortunately, that's

less and less a reality as the years go by. Though e-mail and cell phones have made communicating with distant relatives easier on a day-to-day basis, the increasingly spread out nature of most families still makes travel an integral piece to the puzzle come the holiday season.

Veterans of the holiday travel circuit are well aware of how stressful it can be. But several preemptive steps can be taken to minimize that stress.

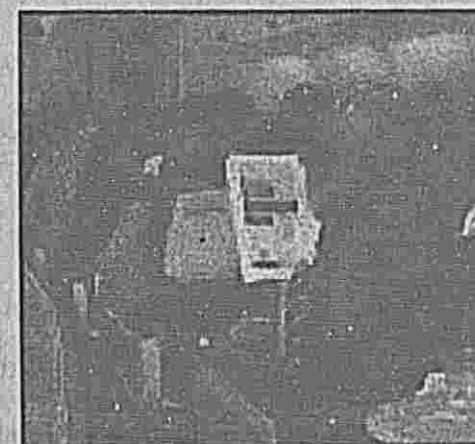
• **Pack early.** Many people head to warmer or colder climates during the holiday season. Whether it's a trip to visit a sibling's family in Southern California or a family get-together at a favorite ski lodge, chances are strong the clothes you'll be wearing during your trip aren't included in your everyday

wardrobe. Pack such clothes well in advance of your trip to save time. When it comes time to leave, you'll only have the essentials left to pack and you'll be on your way.

• **Mail gifts, don't carry them along.** Few things are more difficult than hurrying through an airport with luggage and gifts. In lieu of taking your gifts on the plane with you, send them via a shipping service or the post office. This might cost a little extra, but the money you'll spend will be well worth it.

• **Stay in a hotel.** The stress from holiday traveling is often heightened by staying at the homes of friends or relatives. That's often because accommodations aren't as comfortable as what you might be used to. Book a hotel room in lieu of staying in a friend or relative's guest room. This will also give your trip more of a vacation-like feel and help create a more relaxing atmosphere.

• **Get some rest.** Traveling, regardless of the season or time of year, is tiring. Plan for that in advance of your trip and try and get



Getting to choose your own seat on the plane is just one of the many advantages of making your holiday travel plans as far in advance as possible.

some extra rest in the days leading up to your exodus. Whether you'll be staying in a guest room or a hotel, you can never be sure what kind of sleep you'll get on the road, so make sure you get some rest in the comfort of your own bed before taking off for beds unknown.

• **Don't procrastinate.** Putting off making holiday traveling plans is a good way to increase an already stressful time of year. Get together with family and friends a few months in advance and decide what you'll be doing for the holidays. This will allow you to pick your seat on the plane, book a hotel room in the place you want to stay and will ensure you won't have any more unnecessary holiday stress than you can handle.



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# Take the 'bah humbug' out of returning gifts

**A**s the holidays roll around, one of the first things that come to mind is shopping for gifts. What revelers may not immediately be thinking of is the often tedious process of returning items they don't want or need.

It's not too early to start thinking about returning those Christmas (Holiday? Hanukah?) gifts. Returning gifts is as much a part of the holidays as purchasing them. This process also involves waiting in long lines and dealing with busy store associates.

Just as there are pointers for reducing holiday-shopping stress, there are also ways to minimize the discomfort of making returns.

- Know the store's return policy. When purchasing gifts for friends and family, seek out stores that have a generous return policy. You want to be sure they have ample time to return a gift or make an exchange without a hassle. When purchasing online, know what steps must be taken for a return. You may be responsible for the cost of return postage to send items back. Other online retailers include a pre-posted package for anticipatory returns.

- Fraud puts the pinch on returns. Because there are people looking to cash in on the holiday season by returning gifts fraudulently, some retailers are more stringent in security policies. According to a 2005 report by ABC News, retailers say they're not trying to be the Grinch, but return fraud is costing them an estimated \$16 billion a year, according to the National Retail Federation. So they're targeting those areas that cost them the most — primarily electronics — and setting some rigid rules for those returns. Some stores like Best Buy and Sears charge a restocking fee for returned big-ticket

items, such as opened computers, televisions, etc. Some may also limit the time you have to make returns, or may only offer returns on purchases made during a specific window of time, e.g. Black Friday through December 24.

- Ask for a gift receipt for items you purchase, and hold onto that receipt if it was included with your gift. A consumer-friendly trend is the offering of gift receipts with purchase. This allows a gift recipient to easily return a gift with a receipt featuring a special bar code — the cost of the items is not included on the gift receipt, to maintain confidentiality. Without a receipt, some retailers may only offer an exchange at the current markdown rate, not the original purchase price. This could be up to 50 percent off.

- Don't open packages or remove tags, if possible. If you anticipate returning an item, make sure the condition of the item and packaging are as close as possible to what they were upon purchase. All foam, bags, tags and packing material should be in place. Anything packaged in hard plastic should not be cut open. For clothing or fabric items, leave the tags on and try on items without wearing fragrance or makeup. If an item looks worn or ragged, a store may refuse the return.

- Make returns promptly. You have a better chance of finding something you like as an alternative if you make returns shortly after the holidays. Just keep in mind that other people will also have the same idea, so expect the stores to be busy, especially the day after Christmas.

- Be patient. Soon the holidays will be a distant memory and you'll be able to relax. Keep in mind that many retail clerks and cashiers are overly stressed and working long hours to meet holiday-season needs. Therefore, be courteous and patient when making returns.



You can ensure holiday returns go more smoothly by practicing patience and following a few tips.

- Don't keep it a secret. Gifts were purchased with you in mind, just as you select gifts thinking they'll be perfect for the recipient. If you're planning on making a swap or a return, tell the person who bought the gift — just not right after you've torn off the wrapping paper. Otherwise, this person may be continually looking to see if you're wearing that "lovely" argyle-pattered sweater or displaying that novelty coffee mug.

- Be honest about gifting. Who hasn't purchased a \$20 gift from Walmart and packaged it in a Lord & Taylor box? Make sure recipients know where you purchased to avoid embarrassment should they choose to return later.

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# Top Tips for Easy Entertaining



## FAMILY FEATURES

Chefs have long known the secret to successful entertaining — keep guests occupied and happy while the main course is being prepared. Now they're sharing this tried-and-true tip — and favorite recipes — to help holiday hosts take the stress out of special occasions. Whether you're putting the finishing touches on the main course or pulling together last-minute snacks to welcome unexpected guests, start with something small and delicious.

Appetizers and hors d'oeuvres can be both easy and elegant. Better still, many can be prepared in a pinch. Simply combine pantry staples with seasonal ingredients to create flavorful, colorful dips and toppings that are perfectly pleasing and ready in minutes.

Grant Achatz of Alinea restaurant in Chicago suggests a sweet, creamy combination of cinnamon, ginger, brown sugar, sweet potatoes and whipped cream. Serve this dip with crackers or fruit for a scrumptious starter that celebrates the best flavors of the season.

A tangy hors d'oeuvre featuring cranberries and pistachios tops the list of Chef Carlos Guia's recommendations for in-home entertaining. The Commander's Palace Las Vegas chef blends the fruit and nuts with cream cheese and spreads it on rich, buttery crackers, like Town House Toppers, which have a raised edge to keep toppings in place.

Need a split-second snack? Try Cheez-It pasteurized cheese snack, in Cheddar or Sharp White Cheddar flavors, on your favorite cracker or crudité.

For more easy entertaining tips and recipes from top chefs visit [www.keebler.com](http://www.keebler.com).

## Sweet Potato Toppers

Grant Achatz, Alinea, Chicago

Prep Time: 40 minutes  
Servings: 20

- 4 cups whipping cream
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch-thick slices (about 1 3/4 pound total)
- 3/4 cup bourbon or orange juice
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1/3 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ginger

Keebler Town House Toppers  
Garlic & Herb Crackers

1. In large saucepan, combine cream, granulated sugar and salt. Add potatoes. Bring to boil; reduce heat. Simmer, covered, about 20 minutes or until potatoes are tender.
2. Drain potatoes. Place potatoes in food processor. Cover and process until smooth. Cover and refrigerate at least 1 hour.
3. Meanwhile, in small saucepan, combine bourbon and raisins. Bring to a simmer. Remove from heat. Let stand for 1 hour.
4. Drain raisins. Pat lightly with paper towels.
5. In shallow dish, combine brown sugar, cinnamon and ginger. Add raisins. Stir until coated.
6. Generously spread sweet potato mixture on crackers. Top each with 3 or 4 raisins.

## Cranberry, Port and Pistachio Holiday Toppers

Carlos Guia, The Commander's Palace, Las Vegas

Prep Time: 20 minutes  
Servings: 24

- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup port wine or white grape juice
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened\*
- 1/2 cup chopped pistachio nuts, toasted\*\*
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Keebler Town House Toppers  
Original Crackers

1. In small saucepan, combine cranberries, wine and honey. Bring to a simmer. Cook about 5 minutes or until cranberries are plump. Cool to room temperature.
2. In small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese on medium speed until fluffy. Add half cranberry mixture, half pistachios, parsley, salt and pepper. Beat until combined.
3. Spoon cream cheese mixture onto crackers. Top with remaining cranberry mixture and remaining pistachios.

\*NOTE: Soften in microwave on high 15 to 20 seconds.

\*\*NOTE: To toast nuts, spread evenly on baking sheet. Bake at 350°F 5 to 10 minutes or until light golden brown, stirring once or twice.

Sweet Potato Toppers

Cranberry, Port and Pistachio Holiday Toppers

## Prosciutto and Artichoke Toppers

Allison Barshak, Allison at Blue Bell, Philadelphia

Prep Time: 20 minutes  
Servings: 20

- 1/4 cup chopped marinated artichoke hearts, drained
- 1 tablespoon pesto
- 2 ounces mascarpone cheese\*
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 2 slices prosciutto, cut into small pieces

Keebler Town House Toppers  
Original Crackers

1. In small bowl, stir together artichoke hearts and pesto. Let stand 25 minutes to blend flavor.
2. Meanwhile, in food processor combine mascarpone and Parmesan cheeses, salt and pepper. Cover and process until combined.\*\*
3. Top crackers with cheese mixture, pesto mixture and prosciutto.

\*NOTE: If desired, substitute 2 ounces cream cheese plus 1 tablespoon milk for the mascarpone cheese.

\*\*NOTE: If cheese mixture is too thick, add milk, 1/2 teaspoon at a time, to desired consistency.

## Salmon and Crème Fraîche on Toppers

Brad Thompson, Mary Elaine's, Scottsdale

Prep Time: 20 minutes  
Servings: 24

- 1/4 cup whipping cream
- 1/4 cup crème fraîche
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon prepared horseradish
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons capers\*
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil

Keebler Town House Toppers  
Original Crackers

- 3 ounces smoked salmon, skin removed and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1. Chill small mixing bowl and beaters of electric mixer.
2. In chilled bowl, beat cream, crème fraîche, lemon juice, horseradish, lemon peel, salt and pepper on medium speed until soft peaks form.
3. In small nonstick skillet, cook capers in vegetable oil over medium heat until they pop. Drain on paper towels.\*
4. Spoon cream mixture on crackers. Top with salmon and capers.

\*NOTE: If desired, substitute 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives for capers and oil and omit step 3 above. Top crackers with cream mixture, salmon and chopped fresh chives.

Salmon and Crème Fraîche on Toppers



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